

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1-3, 6-9 and 11-21 as shown below, in which changes are indicated by strikethrough and/or underscoring.

1 1. (Currently amended) An elevated deck snowboard for sliding over snow,
2 comprising:

3 an elongated slide board having a slide surface on a lower surface thereof;
4 an elongated step board defining a deck on an upper surface thereof which is capable
5 of freely accommodating ~~es~~ both feet of a user, and attached to an upper surface of the slide
6 board in spaced and substantially parallel relationship via a connecting assembly including a
7 plurality of connecting members;
8 the connecting assembly being disposed inwardly of peripheral edges of the slide
9 and step boards; and
10 the connecting assembly substantially preventing the slide board and step board from
11 pivoting relative to each other in at least a lateral direction of the snowboard where
12 connected by said connecting members during use of the snowboard, such that ~~the deck~~
13 ~~board provides the user a significant leverage in controlling when in use, the step board is~~
14 capable of allowing significant leverage to be applied to the peripheral edges of the slide
15 board.

1 2. (Previously amended) A snowboard according to claim 1, wherein the connecting
2 assembly is provided in longitudinally middle parts of the slide and step boards and includes
3 at least two of said connecting members spaced from each other in a longitudinal direction of
4 the snowboard .

1 3. (Previously amended) A snowboard according to claim 1, wherein the step board is

2 appreciably greater in width than the slide board.

1 4. (Original) A snowboard according to claim 1, wherein the step board is provided with an
2 engagement portion for allowing engagement of a toe of a snowboarder in a nose part
3 thereof.

1 5. (Original) A snowboard according to claim 1, wherein the step board is provided with at
2 least one boot binding.

1 6. (Previously amended) A snowboard according to claim 1, wherein the connecting
2 assembly substantially completely prevents the slide board and step board from moving
3 relative to each other where connected by said connecting members during use of the
4 snowboard.

1 7. (Previously amended) A snowboard according to claim 1, wherein said connecting
2 members are formed of substantially rigid material and substantially immovably fixed
3 between the slide board and the step board.

1 8. (Previously amended) A snowboard according to claim 7, wherein the connecting
2 members are substantially tubular in shape.

1 9. (Currently amended) An elevated deck snowboard for sliding over snow, comprising:
2 an elongated slide board having a slide surface on a lower surface thereof; and
3 an elongated step board defining a deck on an upper surface thereof which is capable
4 of freely accommodating es both feet of a user, and attached to an upper surface of the slide
5 board in spaced and substantially parallel relationship via a connecting assembly comprising

6 a plurality of connecting members disposed inwardly of peripheral edges of the slide and
7 step boards and made of substantially non-compressible and relatively rigid material such
8 that portions of the slide and step boards remain in a fixed, substantially parallel and spaced
9 relationship where connected by the connecting members during use of the snowboard.

10. [Canceled]

1 11. (Previously amended) A snowboard according to claim 10, wherein the connecting
2 members are formed of at least one of hard plastic material and metallic material.

1 12. (Previously amended) A snowboard according to claim 10, wherein the connecting
2 members are substantially tubular in shape.

1 13. (Previously amended) A snowboard according to claim 9, wherein the connecting
2 assembly is provided in longitudinally middle parts of the slide board and step board.

1 14. (Previously amended) A snowboard according to claim 9, wherein the step board is
2 appreciably greater in width than the slide board.

15. [Canceled]

1 16. (Previously amended) A snowboard according to claim 1, wherein the connecting
2 assembly includes at least two of said connecting members spaced from each other in a
3 longitudinal direction of the snowboard.

17. [Canceled]

1 18. (Currently amended) An elevated deck snowboard for sliding over snow, comprising:
2 an elongated slide board having a slide surface on a lower surface thereof and snow
3 engaging peripheral edges;
4 an elongated step board defining a deck on an upper surface thereof which is capable
5 of freely accommodating es both feet of a user; and
6 a connecting assembly made of substantially non-compressible material connecting
7 the step board to an upper surface of the slide board in spaced and substantially parallel
8 relationship ~~such that the~~ said step board being constructed and arranged to permit a user's
9 ~~feet may to~~ be shifted on the step board during use for imparting leverage through the step
10 board to control orientation of the slide board on the snow;
11 the connecting assembly being disposed at intermediate portions of the slide and step
12 boards inwardly of the peripheral edges of the slide and step boards, and substantially
13 prohibiting at least lateral pivoting movement between portions of the boards where
14 connected by the connecting assembly during use of the snowboard.

1 19. (Currently amended) An elevated deck snowboard for sliding over snow, comprising:
2 an elongated slide board having a slide surface on a lower surface thereof;
3 an elongated step board defining a deck on an upper surface thereof is capable of
4 freely accommodating es both feet of a user, the step board being appreciably greater in
5 width than the slide board; and
6 a connecting assembly made of substantially non-compressible material connecting
7 the step board to an upper surface of the slide board in spaced and substantially parallel
8 relationship, and to allow a substantially increased leverage for the user in controlling the
9 slide board by prohibiting at least lateral pivoting movement between portions of the slide
10 and step boards where connected by the connecting assembly during use of the snowboard,

11 the connecting assembly being disposed at intermediate portions of the slide and step boards
12 inwardly of peripheral edges of the slide and step boards.

1 20. (Previously amended) A snowboard according to claim 19, wherein the
2 connecting assembly substantially prohibits all relative movement between portions of
3 the slide and step boards where connected by the connecting assembly during use of the
4 snowboard.

1 21. (Previously amended) A snowboard according to claim 18, wherein the connecting
2 assembly is made of substantially non-compressible and relatively rigid material and is
3 substantially immovably fixed between the slide board and the step board.

1 22. (Previously added) A snowboard according to claim 1, wherein said connecting
2 assembly is disposed closer to lateral peripheral edges of the slide and step boards than to
3 longitudinal peripheral edges of the slide and step boards.

1 23. (Previously added) A snowboard according to claim 9, wherein said connecting
2 assembly is disposed closer to lateral peripheral edges of the slide and step boards than to
3 longitudinal peripheral edges of the slide and step boards.

1 24. (Previously added) A snowboard according to claim 19, wherein said
2 connecting assembly is disposed closer to lateral peripheral edges of the slide and step
3 boards than to longitudinal peripheral edges of the slide and step boards.